



HI-Q

THE LAKEHEAD AMATEUR RADIO CLUB JOURNAL

LARC- Suite 184, 1100C Memorial Ave., Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada, P7B 4A3

VE3FW - LARC call sign - honours the memory of the Founding President - P. J. "Pat" O'Shea

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LARC EXECUTIVE 2003-2004

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Editor:	Glen Wallace	VE3ICY 623-0135

LARC OPEN ACCESS REPEATERS

VE3YQT	MOUNT BALDY	147.060 (-600) FP
VE3TBR	ST. JOSEPH'S	146.820 (-600) FP
		442.075 (+5 MHz)
VE3BGA	HILLCREST H.S.	145.450 (-600)
		(IRLP NODE VA3LU 123.0 Hz)

The Prez Sez

I hope each of you had a Merry Christmas and all the best in the New Year. This year is special to members of the LARC in that it is our 70th anniversary. Yep, in 1934 the Lakehead Wireless Experimenters Association was formed. This later became the Lakehead Amateur Radio club. So this will be a special year for us.

The January meeting will be at 7:30 on January 8, at the College and this month we will have a guest speaker, Bill Dickerson who will talk about safety on ladders and towers. Should be interesting, and it's our method of ensuring you will be here to pay next year's membership ;-)

I also want to remind you that the annual dinner meeting will be held this year at the Slovak Legion on February 14. We will have tickets available at the January meeting so be sure to pick some up. If that's not convenient the executive will also have tickets to sell to you. We have managed to conjure up something special for the dinner speaker this year that I hope you will enjoy.

Later in January we will be starting the annual radio school for people who are interested in becoming Hams. If you know of an acquaintance or some other person who may be interested in this, bring them to the January meeting and we will have more info for you and them.

On February 28 a group of QRP'ers will be taking part in the Freeze Your Buns Off contest. We will be setting up a field day operation for a few hours at Boulevard Park and operating. We hope to have both cw and fone operations so would be pleased to have visitors who would like to try the field operation.

Over the holidays I was lucky enough to go to Edmonton and Red Deer to see our kids. I brought along my 2M rig and played on the IRLP. If you've not tried this mode of operation give it a whirl. Its really quite neat, to be able to talk to home without setting up antennas and the like. As a word of advice be sure to radio ahead and verify the frequencies and access tones of any of the repeaters where you plan to operate.

So again all the best in the New Year and hope to see you at 7:30 on Thursday for the guest speaker and short meeting afterwards.

73 Bill

Treasurer Ed Baumann says:

Financial Reports will be available at the meeting on Thursday January 8th at the College meeting room(191).

Instructor Ed Baumann says:

Study Classes for Ham Radio start January 29th at the College meeting room, (191) (Thursday 7:30)

Meeting of Lakehead Amateur Radio Club
January 8th, 2004 7:30 P.M.
Confederation College
Room 191

Editor Says: If the article below seems vaguely familiar it's because the first page was printed neglecting to add the second page, (my mistake). I included the whole article as to avoid confusion again. Glen

From Leo VE 3 ATC

CW Hate / Love Affair

There I was, a bushy tailed young 'smart' (well, with a better memory anyway) fella taking Aircraft Avionics at Blackhawk Technical Institute in Janesville, Wis. and learning Morse code on my own!

No, I am not a US subject, but was a misplaced Canuk finally getting some education!

To digress somewhat (about 40 years.. hmmm.. better add a small plus) ...I was 'cruising' on the streets of Dryden (yes, Ontario) when suddenly my AM car radio started sending a bunch of very clear bits and blats, drowning out my macho music... this was intriguing to me and having time on my hands (was in between girlfriends), I started digging around to find the source.

Eventually, this led me to an older (to me) ham who was bedridden but

apparently very active on the bands. (I am ashamed to admit, but his name has gone the way of my memory). We did spend some time together over the next several weeks and I did learn the code to the point of maybe 1 WPM without too many mistakes, before moving on back to more exciting things like cruising and my 60's macho music. So much for that!

Back to Wisconsin 15 years later.. – President Ford just opened the doors for non citizens to obtain their US ham licenses. Being in school taking electronics, I saw my chance to legally play with transmitters, etc. without getting busted in another country.

First, that damn code had to be out of the way! Need 5 wpm... jeeze seems like I was going to have to learn Chinese, only harder!

I got a hold of a Realistic DX160 receiver.. (took every cent I had!). Picked up an old tape recorder which someone donated.. Then found W1AW that eventually became and old friend!

It took a few months of evenings to plow through this code stuff by myself, but I eventually made the 5 wpm!!!! Took a local test and low and behold BECAME A HAM !!! WN9TXK was the call, and I was off and running!

I added an old Hallicrafters HT37 transmitter to my station that I had to fix before it would fire up.

I soon got tired of the slow CW speed (I learned it, and by gum, was going to use it after all that work!). I also did not like the restricted Novice bands. I had no choice if I was to make 13 wpm, the next level requirements, but to keep on testing my patience and tolerance to abuse by more W1AW and DX160 CW listening to get my speed up.

By the way, I lost more contacts on the DX160 due to QSB which I blamed on rotten signal conditions... then one day it hit me.. The DX160 would very slowly drift off frequency and was causing me to close almost every contact with 'losing you' before one day when I retuned it by chance a few times and they came back as a '9' !!!!! So much for 'modern' technology!

I listened to the tapes I had made earlier off of W1AW when driving back and forth to school and or work. I hated the time spent on listening to this stuff - Gone was the macho music!

Because the next amateur level exam would be with the FCC in Chicago, I drove myself to learning 18 to 25 wpm to make damn sure I passed the 13 wpm code test. No code pass, no advance license and no more money available to spend on another trip to the big city in the foreseeable future!

On the way to Chicago, I listened to 18 and 20 wpm tapes ...pretty shaky but I was going to pass the 13 wpm for the next license step General class test come hell or high water!

Made it to the FCC testing room, took the 13 wpm, passed with a smile from the examiner and a nervous wipe of the brow. The written test was thankfully no problem.

While there, he said I could try for the next level – Advanced, if I want, Only required a written test having made the 13 wpm.. I wrote the test and passed!

Now I had gone from a Novice to General to Advanced within an hour!

Hey, I thought.. I'm on a roll... I asked if I could do the Extra Class level (their top

level) although I was starting to get the Willies...

He said, "Sure"!! I paid the additional fee. There goes my lunch money.

I sweated on the 20 WPM code test and missed a few characters (what the hell was that character?) until I got my composure back... After the code test he came back with a 'You made it!!' Now to pass the written part.... Glad I was in avionics, which gave me the background to answer the drilling theory questions.

I walked out of there as an EXTRA class ham!!!! My call was now WB9TXK (the 'N' for novice was gone).

I was so excited that I got lost for several hours trying to get out of Chicago (but that's another story).

Later I applied for and used my Extra Class benefits by getting a 2X1 call – AC9Q which I still hold today in addition to my current callsign.

A few years later, after moving back to Canada I passed the Canadian tests for Advanced level and received my first call VE3KAC while in Timmins. This was later lost when I became inactive for a long period. I now hold VE3ATC.

Over the years my love / hate affair with CW had grown more to love, with all the drilling in cw from my first contact with the patient ham in Dryden (who hadn't given up on me, even when I maxed out at 1 wpm) to passing the 20 wpm Extra class tests in Chicago.

Although I am now struggling to get back to 20 wpm after a long break, CW is music to my ears, (some may disagree, hi) and is right up there with my macho music listening.

CW is now my preferred way of HF communication.

Hope it never ends!

Leo VE3ATC, AC9Q

*Hope all had a Great Holiday Season, See you all at the meeting on
Thursday Glen VE3ICY*